

TDSB Students: Physical Activity and Screen Time

Derived from the TDSB's 2011-12 Student & Parent Census results, this Fact Sheet examines the relationships between demographic factors and student participation patterns in the areas of:

- Extra-curricular Sports Activities in School (including house leagues, sports teams)
- Sports Activities Outside of School (including swimming lessons, community sports teams, individual sports)
- Screen Time Activities after School (such as TV, computer/video games, internet for school work and personal use, social networking)

The highlights in this Fact Sheet focus primarily on the TDSB's 2011 Student Census results in Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12.

Physical Activity: In School and Outside of School

Kindergarten-Grade 6 Students

- Only one related question was asked in the TDSB's 2012 Parent Census (K-Grade 6), which found that certain demographic groups were somewhat more likely to participate in sports/recreation activities outside of school: boys; children with both parents born in Canada; children self-identified as White; children with two parents present in the home; and children with a university educated parents or families with the highest household income levels (\$100,000 and up).

Grade 7-12 Students

Middle school students in Grades 7 and 8 were more active than high school students

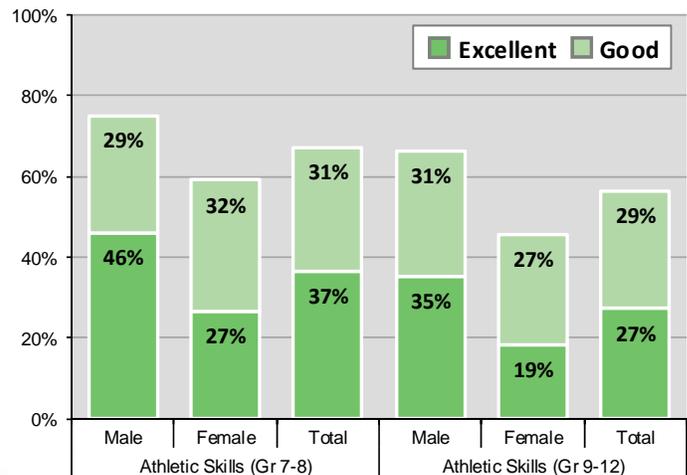
- Students in Grades 7 and 8 were more likely than high school students to rate their athletic skills as excellent (37% versus 27%); or to participate weekly in extra-curricular sports in school (39% versus 26%), individual sports outside of school (37% versus 24%), and/or team sports outside of school (34% versus 24%).

Gender

Male students were more active than females

- Males reported higher levels of daily physical activity, participation in in-school, extra-curricular, and out of school team sports, athletic skill (see graph), and general physical health than females. In many cases, those differences were as high as 20%.
- Lower activity rates for females were particularly evident at the secondary school level, where many females said they never participated in extra-curricular sports activities at school (50%); never got involved in team sports outside of school (62%); and/or spent no time doing other sports or recreational activities after school (32%). Those figures were 15-25% higher than for males.

Ratings of Athletic Skills by Gender: Grades 7-8 versus Grades 9-12
(% reporting "Excellent" to "Good")



Sexual Orientation (Grades 9-12)

- A larger proportion of students in Grade 9-12 who self-identified themselves as heterosexual rated their physical health as excellent or very good (59%) and their athletic skills as excellent to good (58%), compared to students who self-identified as LGBTQ (43% and 42% respectively). Heterosexual students also reported more regular participation in extra-curricular sports activities in school and outside of school.



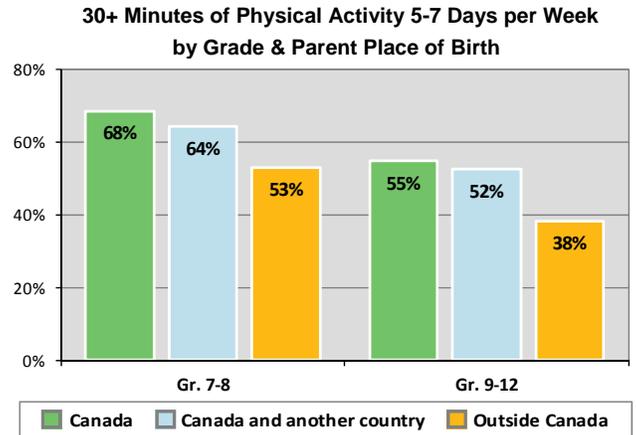
TDSB Students: Physical Activity and Screen Time

Physical Activity: In School and Outside of School (Cont'd)

Parent's Place of Birth

Students with both parents born outside Canada reported less frequent physical activity

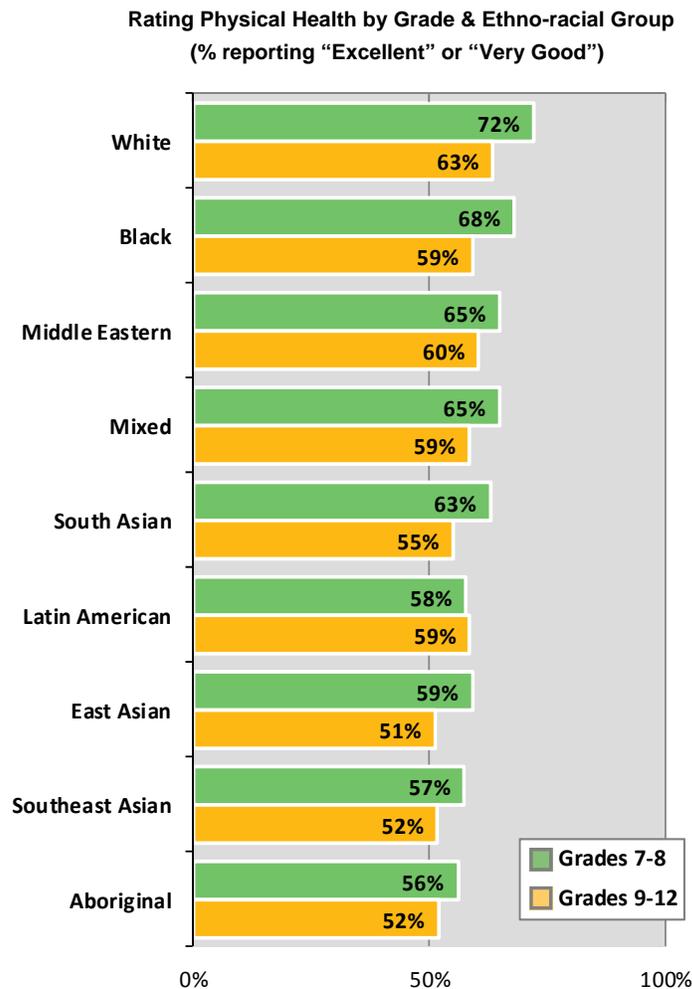
- Both students in Grades 7-8 and Grades 9-12 with two parents born outside Canada reported less frequent physical activity either in or outside of school: 53% of students in Grades 7-8 took part in at least 30 minutes of physical activity between 5-7 days a week, while 38% of students in Grades 9-12 with both foreign-born parents did this. Those figures were 15-17% lower than for students with both parents born in Canada.



Ethno-racial Background

There were some differences in physical activity participation and self-perceptions of health and athletic skill by ethno-racial group

- Self-identified White students most often participated outside of school on a weekly basis in individual sports and/or team sports (42% and 45% respectively in Grades 7-8, and 30% and 32% in Grades 9-12). They also reported more frequent levels of regular or daily physical activity either in or out of school (i.e., at least 30 minutes 5-7 days per week).
- While many students in Grades 9-12 regardless of race (over 40%) said that they never participated in any outside sports-related activities; across all grades self-identified East Asian, Southeast Asian, and Aboriginal students in particular (over 50%) said they never took part in team sports outside of school.
- Depending on their background, between 50% and 70% of students rated their overall physical health as being either very good or excellent. By self-identified ethno-racial group, White students were most likely to rate their health as very good or excellent, while Aboriginals, Southeast Asians, and East Asians were least likely (see graph at right).
- In the case of athletic skills ratings, self-identified Black students rated their athletic skills the highest (i.e., perceived as excellent or good by 79% of Grade 7-8 and 67% of Grade 9-12 Black students). In contrast, self-identified East Asian students rated their athletic skills the lowest. In high school, only 42% of East Asians rated their athletic skills as either excellent or good, while 22% said their athletic skills were weak.



- It should be noted however that those ethno-racial groups reporting lower levels of physical activity or aptitude indicated more frequent extra-curricular participation - up to 10-20% higher than the TDSB average - in other areas both in and outside of school: e.g. cultural group activities (Aboriginal, South Asian); school clubs, music lessons (East Asian); or religious activities (Southeast Asian, South Asian).

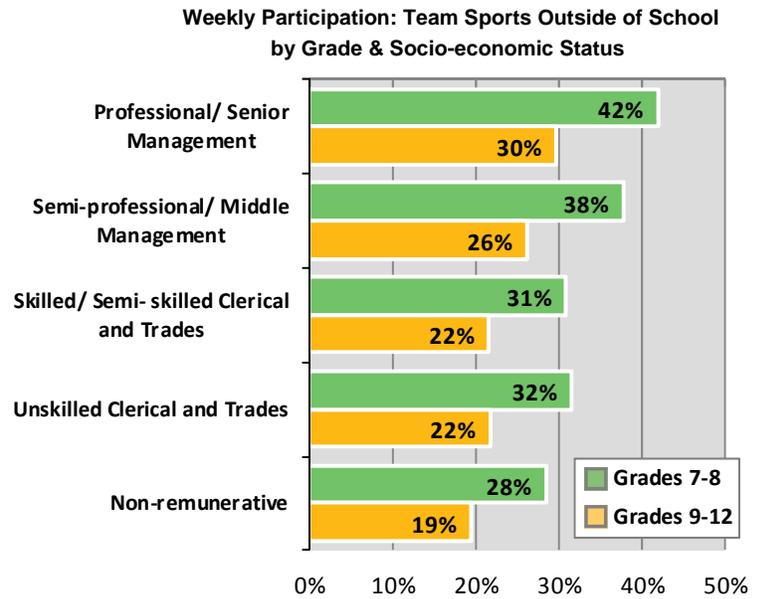
TDSB Students: Physical Activity and Screen Time

Physical Activity: In School and Outside of School (Cont'd)

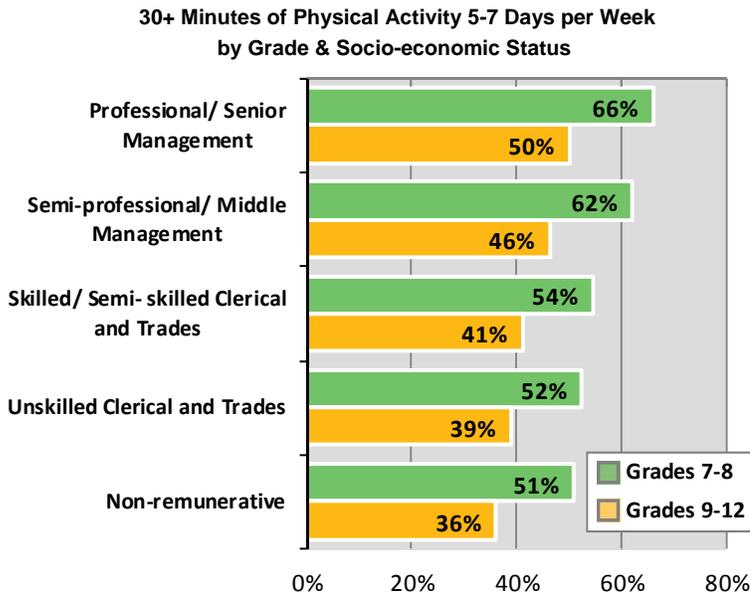
Socio-economic Status (SES)

Parent occupation (as a measure of SES) influenced student participation rates in individual or team sports outside of school, the frequency of regular physical activity, and self-ratings of their overall physical health

- Students with a parent(s) working in the professional/senior management sector had the most positive responses, and results declined gradually with each step down on a continuum of the five occupational categories.*
- In Grades 7-8, 47% of students with a parent(s) working in professional or senior management jobs participated weekly in some type of individual sport or lessons, compared to 30% of students with non-remunerative parents. Comparable figures in Grades 9-12 were 37% and 23% respectively.
- Results for weekly participation in team sports outside of school were similar (see graph on right), indicating gaps between professional or senior management households versus non-remunerative households (e.g., 42% versus 28% in Grades 7-8, and 30% versus 19% in Grades 9-12).



Students from families in the higher SES sectors were more likely to get at least 30 minutes of regular physical activity 5-7 days a week



- 48% of students in Grades 7-8 in non-remunerative households and over 50% of students in Grades 9-12 with parents in the bottom three occupation categories (up to and including skilled or semi-skilled clerical and trade jobs) spent less than an hour or no time during a regular school day either playing sports or doing recreational activities outside of school.
- On the other hand, students from families in the top two occupational tiers (professional/senior management or semi-professional/middle management) were more likely to get at least 30 minutes of regular physical activity 5-7 days a week (see graph on left).
- Those students also rated their overall physical health more positively: 74% of students in Grade 7-8 from the professional sector rated their health as excellent or very good versus 58% for the non-remunerative group. In Grades 9-12, the comparable figures were 65% and 54%.

*Higher SES sectors include parents of students working in professional and senior management sectors, and parents working in semi-professional and middle management sectors. Lower SES sectors include parents of the Grades 7-12 student population who work in skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled clerical and trades occupations, and parents who are non-remunerative, including homemakers, unemployed, or retired.

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After-School Screen Time Activities

This analysis examined *the differences in groups who spent at least 2 hours or more on various screen time activities* such as: watching TV and videos; playing computer or video games; using the internet for school work and/or personal use; and social networking/ texting.

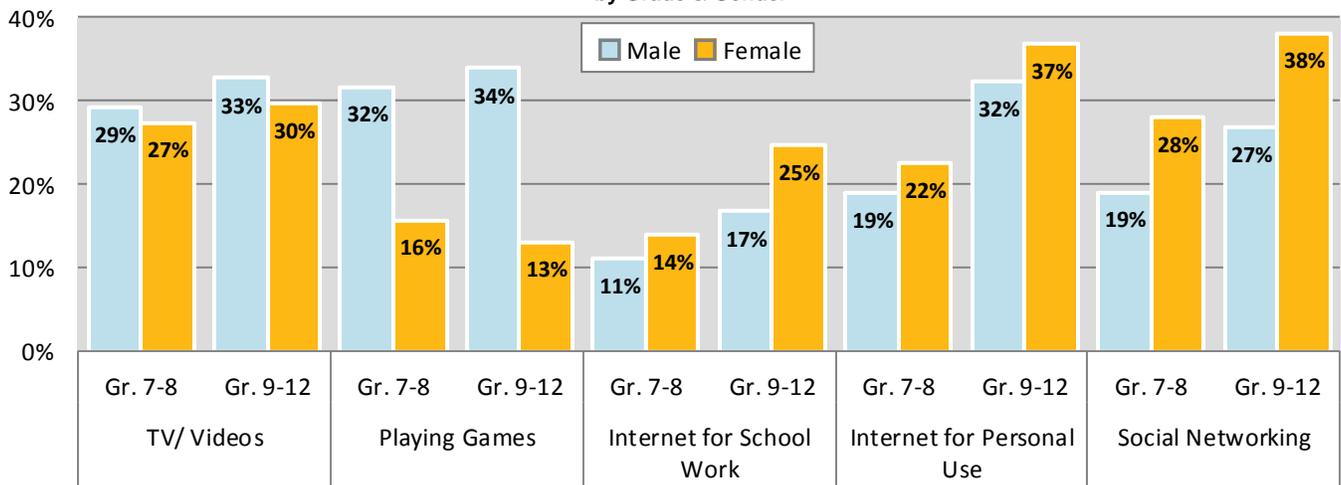
Grade Level

- By grade level, there was little difference in TV/ video viewing or gaming habits. However, secondary school students did spend more time than younger students on the internet for school work (21% versus 12%) or for personal use (35% versus 21%), and on social networking (32% versus 23%).

Gender

- Notable gender differences were evident for some screen time activities. About one-third of all males spent at least 2 or more hours a day playing computer or video games, compared to 13-16% of females; but girls spent more time texting or on social networking sites than boys (e.g., 28% versus 19% in Grades 7-8, and 38% versus 27% in Grades 9-12).

After-School Screen Time Activities (2 hours or more per day)
by Grade & Gender



Sexual Orientation (Grades 9-12)

- Students in Grades 9-12 who self-identified themselves as LGBTQ reported more frequent screen time activity (i.e., 2 hours or more per day) for social networking/ texting (43%) and for use of the internet for personal use (48%), compared to students self-identifying as heterosexual (33% and 34% respectively).

Parents' Place of Birth

- One difference by parents' place of birth was that more secondary school students with both parents born outside of Canada spent 2 or more hours daily on the internet for school work (24%) than students with either one parent (14%) or both parents (11%) born in Canada.

Ethno-racial Background

- Compared to the TDSB average of 21%, only 7% of self-identified Aboriginal and 12% of self-identified White high school students spent 2 or more hours per day on the internet to do school work.
- Trends by ethno-racial group showed that self-identified Aboriginal, Black, and Southeast Asian students had the highest rates of screen time activity compared to other groups in three of the five categories: watching TV, playing video games, and social networking. Personal use of the internet was also especially high for Southeast Asian students in Grades 9-12 (46%), as well as for Aboriginal students (between 21-28% did this more than 3 hours per day).

Socio-economic Status

- Between 15-19% of students with a parent(s) working in the professional/senior management sector (also the most physically active group) spent 2 or more hours a day on four of the five screen time activities, which was 5-10% lower than for other occupational groups. There was little difference between groups relating to their internet use for school work.